HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

44th session

(Item 9)

EXTRACT FROM THE

STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SÃO TOMÉ E PRÍNCIPE

TODAY I WOULD LIKE TO DEAL WITH THE PLIGHT OF ONE PEOPLE THAT ISN'T IN EVERYDAY'S NEWS. FROM TIME TO TIME, HOWEVER WE ARE FACED WITH SOME REPORTS, SOME NEWS AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO SHARE THEM WITH ALL OF US SO THAT WE WILL ABLE, I HOPE, TO ASSUME OUR RESPONSABILITIES. UNDER THE TITLE " A HIDDEN HOLOCAUST" IN THE PACIFIC" RICHARD H. STWART WROTE IN THE BOSTON GLOBE LAST DECEMBER 13 ~~LAST~~, AND I QUOTE," IT HAS BEEN CALLED THE " HIDDEN HOLOCAUST" SO FAR REMOVED FROM WORLD'S COUNSCIOUNESS THAT ONLY A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE ARE AWARE OF THE TRAGIC EVENTS THAT HAVE RAVAGED THE POPULATION OF LITTLE KNOWN PACIFIC ISLAND OF EAST TIMOR...INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS AMINESTY INTERNATIONAL AND ASIA WATCH AS WELL AS A COALITION OF INTERNATIONAL CHURCH GROUPS HAVE PROVIDED REPORTS OF THE BRUTALITY INFLICTED ON THE TIMORESE BY INDONESIAN FORCES, INCLUDING SUMMARY EXECUTIONS, TORTURE, IMPRISONMENT WITHOUT TRIAL AND THE USE OF CIVILIANS AS WALLS IN FRONT OF INDONESIAN TROOPS BATTLING GUERRILLA FORCES...

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ICET 112/88

SOME EVIDENCE OF THE HUMAN SUFFERING CAN BE SURMISED FROM THE REPORT IN 1985 OF EAST TIMOR GOVERNOR MARIO CARRASCALÃO WHO SAID THAT 100.000 EAST TIMORESE HAD DIED SINCE 1975 AND THE ISLAND HAD 20.000 ORPHANS, 13.000 WIDOWS AND 8.000 CRIPPLED OR MAIMED", END OF QUOTATION.

SOME PEOPLE MAY QUESTION THE ACCURACY OF THE ABOVE STATEMENTS SO LET ME MENTION SOME ADDITIONAL SOURCES.

COMMANDER GENERAL L.B. MOERDANI SAID IN A STATEMENT ON DECEMBER 31 LASTYEAR, AND I QUOTE FROM THE JAKART POST: "WE DO NOT GO THERE TO KILL. WE ARE NOT A COLONIAL POWER (SIC) ...IF THEY COME DOWN AND BEHAVE THEMSELVS WE WILL ACCEPT THEM. IF THEY THREATEN US WITH WEAPONS WE WILL SHOOT THEM...THERE ARE NOW ONLY ABOUT 500 OF THEM. SIX TO TEN YEARS AGO THERE WERE AN ESTIMATED 10.000 SUCH PEOPLE IN EAST TIMOR", END OF QUOTATION. I WILL NOT COMMENT SUCH STATEMENTS BUT I WOULD INVITE MEMBERS TO GIVE THEM SOME THOUGHT AND RELATE THEM TO THE FACT THAT THE SAME GENERAL RECOGNIZED THAT IT WILL TAKE "SOME TIME" BEFORE THE THREAT OF ARMED REBELLIONS CAN BE TOTALLY ELIMINATED. IN THAT I CONCUR WITH THE GENERAL BECAUSE THE INDONESIA ARMY IS IN EAST TIMOR SINCE 1975. I THINK IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT GENERAL MOERDANI IS....THE CHAIRMAN OF EAST TIMOR DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE. INDEED THE QUESTION OF DECOLONIZATION OF EAST TIMOR HAS BEEN A PERMANENT CONCERN OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE FIVE AFRICAN PORTUGUESE SPEAKING COUNTRIES. AT THEIR ANNUAL SUMMIT MEETINGS THE HEADS OF STATE OF ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE, GUINE-BISSAU, CAPE-VERDE AND SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE REAFFIRM THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRUGGLE OF THE PEOPLE OF

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TL 1505-22

EAST TIMOR AND APPEAL TO MEMBER STATES OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS TO HELP IN ANY POSSIBLE MANNER THE PEOPLE OF EAST TIMOR TO REALIZE THEIR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO FREEDOM AND SELF-DETERMINATION.

MY DELEGATION IS GRATEFUL TO THE NON-GOVERNAMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN EXPRESSING THEIR CONCERN OVER THE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN EAST TIMOR. WE TOOK NOTE WITH SATISFACTION OF THE ACTION UNDERTAKEN BY FORTY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA SENATORS AND 144 MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WHO PROTESTED CONDITIONS IN EAST TIMOR AND WROTE TO SECRETARY OF STATE GEORGE SHULTZ THAT INDONESIAN FORCES WERE ENGAGED IN "A RENEWED OFFENSIVE" AGAINST TIMORESE INSURGENTS".

LATELY HIS Holyness POPE JOHN PAUL II, WHILE RECEIVING THE CREDENCIALS OF THE NEW INDONESIAN AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN OVER THE SITUATION IN EAST-TIMOR IN THE FOLLOWING WORDS:

" THE CHATOLIC CHURCH'S UNIVERSAL MISSION OF SERVICES LEADS HER TO HOPE THAT PARTICULAR CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THE PROTECTION OF THE ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE OF EAST TIMOR".

~~ALL~~ THESE ENDEAVOURS AS WELL AS THE EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO FULFIL THE MANDATE ENTRUSTED TO HIM BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 37/30 OF 1982 ARE REASONS FOR US TO HOPE. HOWEVER, MY DELEGATION BELIEVES, THAT NO SATISFACTORY SOLUTION OF THE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE OF EAST TIMOR WILL BE FOUND UNLES THAT PEOPLE IS ALLOWED TO FREELY EXERCISE ITS FUNDAMENTAL

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RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 1514(XV). IN ITS OPENING ADRESS MR. JAN MARTENSON, SAID: "IN SPECIFIC CASES, OF COURSE, WE MUST NOT FEAR TO SPEAK OUT UNEQUIVOCALLY WHEN THE NEEDS ARISES. IF OUR CRITERIA ARE KNOWN AND ACCEPTED, IF OUR STANDARDS ARE TRULY UNIVERSAL AND OBJECTIVE, WE CAN SPEAK WITH CLEAR CONSCIENCE. WE ARE AWARE THAT SILENCE IS TOO OFTEN THE WILLING ACCOMPLICE OF TYRANY AND WE MUST NOT FORGET IT".

MY APPEAL TO ALL MEMBERS OF THIS COMMISSION IS JUST ONE : LET'S NOT FORGET THE PEOPLE OF EAST-TIMOR.

THANK YOU